

ST 29, 1903.

PRIVATE JOHNSON'S LOVE AFFAIR

By EDWARD MARSHALL

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Private Johnson of G company was much in love. But although he daily for a blissful hour or so did sentry duty within a few feet of her, he had not been able to disclose his love. He could not speak Spanish nor she English. They had been forced to confine their evidences of affection to smiles and sighs, she to the same, supplemented by languid movements of her fan. Private Johnson could stand it no longer; so that night after he had "biked" with the others of his guard to the barracks he confided his troubles to his "bunkie," Mike Nolan.

"I'm stuck on the skinniest little Spanish girl that ever waved a fan."

"What is she—Spagady?" asked Mullins.

"No, she ain't," said Johnson; "and that's the trouble."

Now it must be explained that when the American army took possession of Havana there were few men in it, either officers or privates, who could speak Spanish. Therefore the residents of the Cuban capital, black, yellow and white, who found it for many reasons absolutely necessary to communicate with the Americans created a new language.

It was and is more involved and intricate in its futile imitations of our mother tongue than the "pidgin English" of the Chinaman. And any Cuban who can speak this strange patois announces with much pride, "I spagady Ingles." The quick witted Americans christened all these "Spagadies."

"I've got to take her home with me," Johnson said gloomily. "I'd rather go up San Juan hill again than go home without her."

Private Mullins puffed reflectively on a long cigarette. Private Mullins had had his own love affair since he had been in Cuba, and it had not turned out well. He had been imbibited by it. It had merely made him sympathetic.

"Tell me about it, Johnson," he said. "Well, it was this way: When I was put on sentry duty down there by the bank I couldn't help but look in the windows next door, and I saw her. And, oh, Mullins, boy, she's the wonder of the age. And I smiled, and she smiled, and I'm in love with her, and she's in love with me."

"Why don't you write it, you idiot?" asked Mullins.

"You've got as much brains as a turpentine mango, Mullins, or less," said Johnson. "If I could write it I could talk it too, couldn't I?"

"Well," said Mullins reflectively, "I meant that you could get some of the fellows to write it for you."

"You're trying to let me in," said Johnson, eying him suspiciously. "Is there a man in this regiment you'd trust to write such a letter for you?"

"No," said Mullins, "there ain't. But I'll tell you what, I know an officer in the rurales (rural police) who speaks English and who'd do it. You've got to hurry, though."

"Why?" asked Johnson.

"We've ordered home," said Mullins. "I heard the general tell the colonel so today. I was on orderly duty at headquarters, you know."

"Hoory!" shouted Johnson, and someone who was trying to go to sleep threw a canteen at him.

That night the two friends devoted an hour to the composition of the great letter which the lieutenant was to translate into Spanish.

It was a plain, straightforward recital of the young soldier's love and circumstances. It described his home and told her, much to Mullins' amazement, that Private Johnson's family was well to do.

"Is that straight?" asked Mullins doubtfully.

"Sure," said Johnson. "I wouldn't lie to her, you chump."

Mullins said he thought the letter would be all right after the lieutenant had thrown some hifalutin Spanish phrases into it.

The next day Mullins took the letter to his friend the lieutenant of rurales whose name was Linares. The lieutenant, loving intrigue as all Spaniards do, said that he would be delighted to serve Mullins' friend.

"Shall I address the letter also?" asked the lieutenant.

"You'd better," said Mullins. "Then it will be all in the same handwriting."

"You must first give the address," said the lieutenant.

And Mullins gave it to him. If he had been quick witted he would have noticed an instantaneous change in the quality of the smile upon the lieutenant's face, but he missed it.

"The taste of your friend is sublime, superb, quite worthy of an American soldier."

"You know her, then?" asked Mullins.

"I have seen her," said the lieutenant as he rolled a fresh cigarette. "She is beautiful, very. I will have the letter in an hour."

In an hour Mullins went back. The lieutenant rapidly translated it to him. The long, dignified and flowery declaration of Private Johnson's love poured from his lips in sonorous sentences. Mullins wrote them down in English. When he read them to Johnson that night the latter heaved a sigh of satisfaction.

"It takes these dagos," he said finally, "to sling language."

Next day when Private Johnson took his place on sentry duty his heart beat faster. It seemed an age before the shy but smiling face of the charming

Spanish girl appeared behind the bars of the big window. Her head was coyishly covered by a mantilla of black lace, and in her hand she held the dainty fan which she knew so well how to use. The wonderful letter was in the inner pocket of his blouse. He saluted blushing; she waved her hand toward him and smiled. He glanced up and down the street. The coast was wholly clear; so, with his cheeks flaming, he approached the window.

"Buenos Dias, señorita," he said falteringly.

"Buenos Dias, señor," she replied, with blushes.

With a military gesture he took the letter from his pocket and presented it.

She seemed to be much surprised. Her flush grew deeper, and she placed her hand upon her breast as if to say: "This for me?"

He bowed assent. She quickly thrust the letter into the bosom of her bodice. Then she turned away, but before she wholly vanished she blew him a bashful kiss from the tip of her fan.

All morning Private Johnson watched for her in vain. During his afternoon tour of duty his eyes were on the window whenever he could keep them there.

He was greatly disappointed when the night relief came on and he was picked up by the retiring squad for the return to barracks. He had not seen her again. But the memory of that smile was with him still.

Next morning at roll call the lieutenant who inspected glanced approvingly at Private Johnson's shoes and buttons and speckled uniform. But just before dismissal he called out:

"Private Johnson, fall out and report to the colonel."

Johnson was amazed, but with soldierly decision did as he was told. The colonel seemed in bad temper.

"Johnson," he said sharply, "you have a good record."

Johnson looked pleased.

"You know that you're going home next week, don't you?"

"I have heard so, sir."

"Well, then, why didn't you try to keep your record clean?" asked the colonel pettishly. He was a martinet, but he was really fond of his good men.

"I have tried to, sir," said Johnson proudly.

"Do you know what the orders are about insulting the citizens of Havana?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then why did you gratuitously insult the Señorita Mercedes y Borda?"

Johnson was aroused. "I have not insulted her," he said firmly.

The colonel picked up an envelope which had been lying on his table and produced the letter which had been hidden in the señorita's bosom on the day before. "Did you not give this letter to her yesterday? She says you did, and your name is signed to it."

"I did, sir," said Private Johnson.

The colonel was getting red in the face. "And don't you consider it insulting?" he demanded.

Private Johnson's face was pale. "No, sir," he said very firmly. "I do not think it an insult to any woman on earth for an American citizen and soldier to ask her to be his wife."

The colonel gasped. "Your wife!" he exclaimed. "Did you ask her to marry you?"

"I did, sir."

"In this letter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you write it?"

"No, sir; I had it written."

"Did you tell the man who wrote it for you to address her as 'My Dear Turnip,' to speak of her father as a blackguard?"

Johnson was speechless. The colonel saw his real distress and slowly and even mercifully translated the perfidious lieutenant's composition to him. He was sorely tempted to shout with laughter, but he was merciful and did not.

La Lucha is a newspaper in Havana which has two pages in Spanish and two pages containing an English translation of them.

In the English of La Lucha that very day was announced the engagement of Lieutenant Jose Linares of the rurales to Signorita Mercedes y Borda.

And Private Johnson was wondering why he had been fooled.

Emigration of French Capital.

One of the serious matters which face the French government is the vast amount of French capital which has left that country in the last few years and continues to do so. The last returns of the government savings banks show an excess of \$2,000,000 francs in the withdrawals over the deposits.

Much of this has gone to England, some to this country and a very considerable part to German rents. It is this withdrawal of capital to which the fall in French rents may be attributed rather than to the controversy between the church and state, which has generally been regarded as the cause. The causes of the withdrawal of the capital are several. One important one is the impending income tax.

The feeling is that if the Socialists continue to grow in power they will not be satisfied with the income tax, but will demand further imposts on the revenue from private investments.

Mortuary Red Tape.

The following incident is related as having occurred in South Africa: One of the soldiers who had been reported killed in a certain battle and against whose name in the regimental books a note to that effect had been made afterward turned up and reported himself. Then the sergeant made another note in the book: "Died by mistake."

The man was placed in the hospital and a few weeks later succumbed to the injuries he had received. This fact was communicated to the sergeant, and then a third note was made: "Rebuked by order of the colonel."

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February 17, 1903.

STATE OF CATHERINE RAYNER,

Pursuant to the order of JOSEPH W. ELLOR,

Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day

made, on the application of the undersigned

executor of said deceased, notice is hereby

given to the credit of said deceased and

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